JOURNEY

AIDS Update



THE UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES

October 1985

Post-Conference Issue

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JOURNEY

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Cover Photo

The Rev'd Elder Freda Smith preaches the opening service of General Conference on Monday morning.

Journey photo

We believe...

In one triune God, omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient, of one substance and of three persons: God--our Parent-Creator; Jesus Christ the only begotten son of God, God in flesh, human; and the Holy Spirit--God as our Sustainer.

That the Bible is the divinely inspired Word of God, shoving forth God to every person through the law and the prophets and finally, completely and ultimately on earth in the being of Jesus Christ.

That Jesus...the Christ, historically recorded as living some 2,000 years before this writing, is God incarnate, of human birth, fully God and fully human, and that by being one with God, Jesus has demonstrated once and forever that all people are likewise Children of God, being spiritually made in God's image.

That the Holy Spirit is God making known God's love and interest to all people. The Holy Spirit is God, available to and working through all who are willing to place their welfare in God's keeping.

Every person is justified by Grace to God through faith in Jesus Christ.

We are saved from loneliness, despair and degradation through God's gift of grace, as was declared by our Savior. Such grace is not earned, but is a pure gift from a God of pure love. We further commend the community of the faithful to a life of prayer; to seek genuine forgiveness for unkind, thoughtless and unloving acts; and to a committed life of Christian service.

The Church serves to bring all people to God through Christ. To this end, it shall arrange for regular services of worship, prayer, interpretation of the Scriptures, and edification through the teaching and preaching of the Word.

The First Step



We Are Becoming

Congratulations UFMCC. We are growing up. There is a maturity of understanding continually happening in our Fellowship. In sixteen years our denomination is successfully attempting to live the Christ dream with predictable results. We are becoming aware of what mutual healing is. We are awakening to not only the needs of the many but of the needs of the few. We are shifting our focus from living by works to living by faith. Despite the depressing stories that we sometimes hear within the Fellowship we must not miss the victories. We hear sometimes about the love/hate relationship between clergy and laity but through that we continue to learn how to minister to each other, sometimes successfully. We don't know exactly how to handle the impending AIDS crisis but we are learning and we will learn first because we must.

We haven't learned yet how to balance our worship with music that will allow the Spirit to move equally for everyone in the wonderful diversity with which we are gifted, but we are a patient people and have high expectations that it will happen at General Conference XIII. Despite the heavy doses of seemingly pious fundamentalist music sung at Conference, our theology remains healthily diverse and we know that there are many roads to Jesus, not just the pious nationalism that sings, "Jesus--J-E-S-U-S . . . US . . . US". Our consciousness was awakened, not defeated, by this music when some of us recognized the subliminal message of exclusivity that Jesus is a U.S. citizen. Our collective consciousness will make an important difference at the next General Conference.

God has gifted us with the task of learning how to participate in mutual healing. We know now that the first step in ministry is the process of healing self. We know (intellectually at least) that God loves us and we already are forgiven ad infinitum for the things we do and do not do. Why be afraid now to give and receive from each other the abundant joy and grace available to us when we participate in each others' joy and pain?

Our Fellowship is rich with stories of grace: clergy who have given up good paying jobs . . . "to be"; laity who have learned new definitions of the word success that have little to do with the number of zeros on a paycheck. Churches, large and small, find grace when their focus collectively becomes ministry.

Our momentum is begun. We must tell, write, publish our individual and church stories and let each other know how love and justice do happen. This is a beginning. Let's release the high pressure valves of stress and pain that are defeating some of us. There is hope, UFMCC, because you also are the illumination of the world.

--Sandra Lynn Robinson

Letters 'n Thots

Congratulations

After wondering when I was going to receive my copies of **Journey** the new issue arrived much to my delight.

Sincere congratulations on the new issue to everyone involved.

As a previous pastor of Philadelphia, Miami, Jacksonville, Columbia and San Bernadino, I enjoy keeping up with news of the Fellowship progress.

I like the newsprint edition. It serves the purpose well and you should continue to expand as the Lord provides.

Rev'd Keith D. Davis
New York

Disagrees on 'suffering'

I am writing to you about Rev'd Celena Duncan's article on "The Question of Suffering." I understand that this is a very thorny problem.

Rev'd Duncan made a number of statements which I strongly disagree with and for the first time I feel compelled to write and make known my feelings. There are five main points with which I disagree--

1. How can the writer be a Christian if she comprehends God as being demonic? Demons are spiritual beings determined to overthrow and totally corrupt God's creation under the direct supervision of the Devil (Satan).

2. The Genesis account does tell us of God's anger. Remember the Angel with the flaming sword set at the entrance to Eden to bar the way? (Gen. 3:24) The sword symbolizes God's judgement.

3. If the writer can accept God's foreknowledge, why can she not accept that God allowed the fall to happen? Humans have always had the Gift of free will, we are created with free will. It is free will which sets us above the animals. Without free will we would be robots. God took the risk of giving us free will as God wanted us to choose to love [God].

4. It is not the image of God within humans which made the fall possible, but our free will.

5. When God forbade Adam and Eve to eat of the Tree, because if [they] did [they] would die, does this not mean that if Adam [and] Eve had not eaten of the Tree [they] would not die? We are told that by a Tree we were condemned to death but by a Tree (Christ's Cross) we may have eternal life. We will rise as Christ rose. Christ's resurrection was physical as well as spiritual. Because of the Fall all flesh is now flawed and must perish, but we are to experience the resurrection and become what we would have been had the fall not happened.

I do not believe that illness or suffering is sent from God, but [is] a consequence of the fall and our choosing to accept Satan's word above that of Almighty God. I believe that death for a Christian is a gift of God, for we are going home. We are going to become what we were destined for.

If the fall had not happened, we would not have suffering or death. Because of Adam and Eve choosing to follow Satan (a being opposed to God), they made the choice to place another as their ruler, they turned their backs on The Creator.

We still do the same today. Because of that act they and we have placed ourselves under the domination of the first being in creation to totally oppose God, and whose sole purpose is to destroy, distort and corrupt that which God created and saw as being Very Good.

Humanity was God's ultimate declaration and the pinacle of all creation. We are God's pearl of great price, and Satan's only desire is to smash and maim that which God holds dear. That is why we suffer. Yes, God shares that suffering with us and has borne the greatest part for us by entering creation as a part of that which God created. The only way God can stop all suffering apart from uncreating everything is through the Cross and Resurrection. That is the resurrection power and why Satan is defeated by the Cross of Christ Jesus.

That is why we are commanded to preach Christ Crucified. The Cross and empty tomb are God's promise that suffering and death are for a short time and the beginning of eternity as we should have been.

Do not accept the Devil's lie that death is darkness and pain. It is our rebirth into God's unending blessings and the start of the which was meant to be from the Beginning.

Geoff Jarnell
Middlesbrough UK

Editor: You have chosen to articulate the classical opinion of many who hold that sin and suffering are a result of the Fall. Still others, including Ms. Duncan, suggest alternatives to this explanation. We will all know perfectly one day, when we are no longer "looking at puzzling reflections in a mirror." As Paul earlier stated in 1 Corinthians, "Our knowledge is always incomplete and our prophecy is always incomplete, and when the complete comes, that is the end of the incomplete."

CHURCH WORLD News

RIVERSIDE CHURCH AFFIRMS GAY/LESBIAN PARTICIPATION

New York--The Riverside Church in New York City has issued a resolution supportive of gay and lesbian participation in the church. The controversial measure was passed by a 2 to 1 margin in one of the largest recent congregational meetings. Following a discussion of sexuality in general, the statement said that, "We reaffirm the traditional family, and we further recognize and embrace single persons, Lesbian/Gay relationships, extended families--all families of support that are founded on principles of love and justice." It went on to affirm that "Lesbian/Gay people are expected and encouraged to share in the liturgy, general life, employment and leadership of our congregation." The document concluded with several points against homophobia and its attendant violences. The Riverside Church has had a long line of influential pastors since its founding by Harry Emerson Fosdick, and is well known for its progressive social stances.

FRANCE PASSES PROTECTION BILL

Paris--France became the first nation to prohibit anti-gay discrimination on a national scale. The bill, which includes racial and religious minorities as well, prohibits discrimination in housing employment, and access to government services. Originally passed by the General Assembly, the bill was then defeated in the opposition controlled Senate, but that veto was subsequently overridden by the General Assembly. (In the French government, the General Assembly has the ultimate decision-making power.) The bill will become law as soon as it is published in the Official Journal of the legislature.

DIGNITY ESTABLISHES SCHOLARSHIP

New York--Region II of Dignity, the Roman Catholic gay organization, has established two educational scholarships directed to furthering ministry among gay/lesbian persons. The two $500 scholarships are dedicated to the memory of Bob Weisskopf, a long time member of the Queens chapter of Dignity. Any full-time undergraduate student who is a resident of the region II area, New York and New Jersey, is eligible. Interested clergy pursuing studies in ministry to the gay/lesbian communities are also eligible. Further information may be had from Dignity--Region II, Scholarship Committee, PO Box 621 P, Bayshore NY 11706.

CHURCHES SUPPORT FEDERAL BILL

Washington--Eleven different denominations sent a joint letter to the members of Congress in support of the national Gay and Lesbian Civil Rights Bill, HR 230. The letter was signed by representatives of the Church of the Brethren, United Methodist Church, Lutheran Council in the USA, The Presbyterian Church, United Church of Christ, Episcopal Church, Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Unitarian-Universalist Association, American Ethical Union, and the National Council of Churches. Though acknowledging that some of the traditions represented oppose the practice of homosexuality, the letter said that they all "maintain strong support for the protection of basic civil and human rights of all persons." The letter was coordinated by Ralph Watkins, Legislative Counsel of the Church of the Brethren, who said, "We have

been offended that the public portrayal of religious perspectives on this issue has focused almost exclusively on negative, anti-gay sentiments."

COMPANY REFUSES TO ERASE SIGN

Forest Park--The Wright Advertising Corporation has refused to erase a translation of I Corinthians 6:9 painted on a bus stop on Roosevelt Road, near a gay bar located in Forest Park IL. The translation used is not a standard translation of the passage, but has been described as a "particularly vicious mistranslation of the passage, utilizing the most virulent anti-gay terminology." The Illinois Gay and Lesbian Task Force (IGLTF) objected to an executive of the company, Ms. Joy Kasperski. She was presented with statistics from the National Gay Task Force on violence against gay men and lesbians, a proper translation of the verse, and a request to paint over the sign. The request was refused. Ms. Kasperski refused to reveal who owns the bench, but said that the person who owns it owns 50 such benches. She added that the company would not allow a biblical quotation imputing the death of Christ to the Jews, but felt no moral obligation to seek the replacement of the anti-gay sign. The IGLTF has asked that objections be made to Ms. Kasperski at Wright Advertising, (312) 652-6020.

EERDMAN BOOK WELCOMES GAY COUPLES

Grand Rapids--In a book recently published by the evangelical Eerdman's Publishers, Christian psychiatrist Jack Kominian calls for the church to support gay relationships. "The Growth of Love and Sex" says that it is not enough to encourage gay Christians to play a major role in the church, but that they need supportive relationships which are "infinitely preferable to casual, transient encounters and the loneliness of isolated men and women."

ANGLICANS ELECT PRESIDING BISHOP

Anaheim--Stating that the chief operating motto of the church should be, "There are no outcasts," the new chief pastor of the Episcopal Church graciously accepted his election September 10, 1985. The Right Reverend Edmond Lee Browning was elected presiding bishop and primate of the 2.7-million-member Episcopal Church. With a reputation of broad international experience and support of gay ordination and opposition to the nuclear arms race, Bishop Browning is a member of Integrity, and was among the group of Episcopal prelates to dissent publicly from the church's 1979 decision barring the ordination of "practicing homosexuals".

CHURCH HAS GAY/LESBIAN MINISTERS

Bangor--The Rev'd F. Jay Deacon began duties as minister of the the 167 year old Unitarian church of Bangor, church in August. Between 1973 and 1983 he served congregations of the UFMCC in Hartford and Chicago.

Dr. Deacon transferred his ministerial credentials to the UUA in 1983. The denomination, with more than 1,000 congregations and 176,000 followers, has an official policy of nondiscrimination and affirmative action on the issue of gay and lesbian ministers. It gives official recognition to gay and lesbian services of union.

Also just elected is another openly gay minister, the Rev'd Charlies Kast, who assumed responsibilities September 1 at the Second Unitarian Church of Chicago. His church is just blocks from Good Shepherd Parish MCC, Dr. Deacon's former pastorate.

The first openly lesbian minister to be elected to a UUA church, the Rev'd Barbara Pescan, is serving the Oak Park Beacon UUC, located just outside Chicago. Her companion, the Rev'd Ann Tyndall, serves as religous education director at the Evanston UUC.

Fellowship News



Commission on Laity meets in Sacramento

The UFMCC Commission on the Laity met with its new leadership on Saturday morning at the Sacramento General Conference. Chair Chuck Harvey (from the Northwest District) and Assistant Chair Ken Frantz (from the Southeast District) were grateful for nearly 100% attendance of all District Lay Representatives. The Commission reaffirmed its commitment to the projects begun by the previous chairs, Jackie Walker and Larry Rodriguez, such as the COL Lay Delegate workshop, establishing a Commission on Laity Structures within every district, developing a catalogue of lay resources, fundraising for intrepreters equipment, and the reprinting of Jean Graley's **Whole Church Handbook**.

The new goals of the Commission will be: 1) to improve networking among ourselves via fellowship and district publications; 2) to insure district funding for lay representative travel and expences, for example for the tentative COL meeting with the General Council in October 1986; 3) to organize and conduct a UFMCC lay conference immediately prior to the next General Conference in Ft. Lauderdale. We are also considering inter-district and regional lay gatheringsin 1986.

Individually, each District lay representative chose a special area of concern that they will research and develop into a COL "position paper" to be ultimately submitted to appropiate fellowship offices, publications, and in appropiate workshops. These issues include: student clergy and clergy spouses as lay delegates, current trends in clergy/lay relations, impact of the new GSS on district standard operating procedures and subsequent lay involvement, support for EXCEL, loneliness, and cultural education.

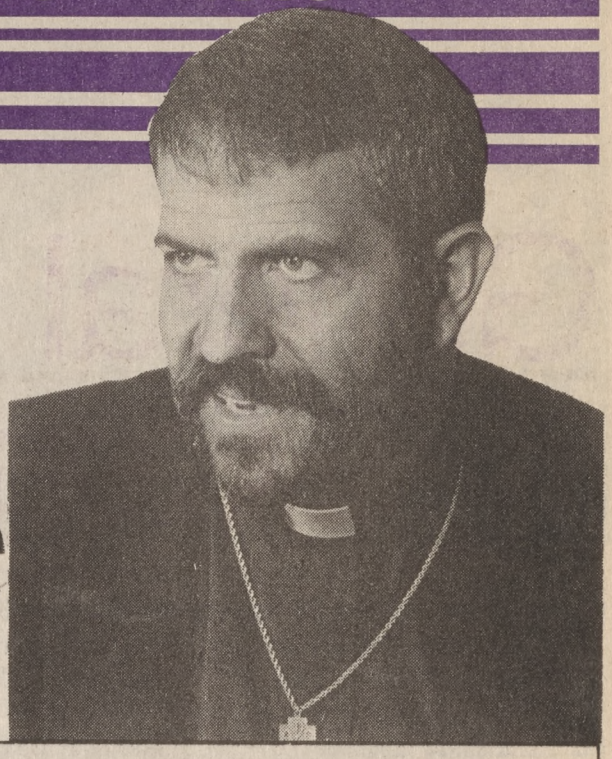
We are very excited that the Commission members can now devote their full attention and energy into COL activities now that their commitment to the GSS process has been successfully complted. We welcome any suggestions that you may have on the course that the Commission will be taking. Also, if you wish to be included on the COL mailing list, write or call: Chuck Harvey, 4051 East Burnside, Portland OR 97214 -- (503) 232-0669.

General Conference memorabilia is still available from the Fellowship offices. The complete selection of tapes from the worship services costs $50, including the music from the Saturday evening concert. T-Shirts can be had for $5, and buttons are now $.50.

The Clergy Credentials and Concerns Committee now has the Student Clergy manual. It costs the same as the Clergy Manual, $10 plus $3 shipping. Also, note that the Polity Exam will not be offered until the second quarter of 1985-1986.

The UFMCC By-Laws will be available shortly for $1.50 plus shipping. For your copy(s), send your order to the Fellowship offices with a current address and number of copies needed. You will be billed later. Unfortunately, the Spanish translation is not yet available; it will be forthcoming as soon as possible.

17 YEARS
1968 • 1985



UFMCC

Fellowship Sunday

October 6th of this year, we celebrate the 17th anniversary of the founding of the first church in our denomination. Fellowship Sunday is an official celebration in the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. We use that Sunday to introduce the UFMCC to new members and friends and to remind our on-going membership of who we are and the work God has given us to do. We receive an offering that day for the work of the denomination on the adinistrative level. It is a day of special sharing. Our theme this year is 'Free to be...The Universal Fellowship."

To help you celebrate Fellowship Sunday headuarters has prepared a videocassette of a part of the sermon I delivered the closing service of General Conference. We are running a full-page ad in the **Advocate** listing all of our churches.

I look forward to hearing from you concerning this year's Fellowship Sunday. Thank you in advance for sharing in this celebration.

'God's always on time!'

The Rev'd Elder Troy Perry
Moderator, UFMCC

"I want to share with you that in the last 17 years, God has heard the prayers of God's people and has answered our prayers over and over again.

"That prayers that God has answered for me over the years never cease to amaze me. Many of you have heard me say that **'God may be slow, but God's always on time.'** God does not always answer our prayers in the time-frame we set, but our prayers are answered in God's 'good time.'

"Many of you who have read my book or know me personally know that for 19 years I have prayed to see my sons. Nineteen years ago, my former wife and I separated and she took my boys with her as she moved to the midwest. She immediately lost contact with me.

"At General Conference this year, I renewed my prayer that God might let me see my sons again. One week after Conference my younger son, James Michael, made contact with me. We have gotten to spend almost every weekend since then together. People, **God is still in the prayer-answering business!!"**

General Conference 12

Editor--So often those of us who have been in the Fellowship for some time tend to overlook the excitement of General Conference. We are caught up in business, discussions in the hallways, and late-night caucuses in motel rooms. So it's refreshing to "see" General Conference again through the eyes of a "first-timer." The author of our General Conference review article is just such a person. And she speaks with the freshness and excitement that many of us felt at our first Conference. Let's hope we never lose that "first love," or at the very least we can capture it again.

Deborah A. Fecas
MCC Baltimore

About two months ago, I was sitting in one of our Wednesday night meetings listening to our pastor, the Rev'd Jennie Boyd Bull, and others in our church talk about their experiences at District Conference. Having only been in MCC Baltimore for a few months, I had no idea what a District Conference was or what you did there but it was not long before I realized that I had missed a tremendous time in the Spirit. After the meeting someone made the comment, "If you think District Conference sounded great, multiply that by ten and you have General Conference!" That statement, clinched my decision. I was going to do everything in my power to get to General Conference the following month--and was I glad I did!

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The Rev'd John Gill receives his own Cabbage Patch baby from GSS Commission members when the GSS proposal is finally "adopted."
Journey photo

'I promised...'

to hug and kiss his mother . . .

Hugh and I had what few people ever experience -- besides loving each other, we were very close, almost as one. During his last 11 days in intensive care, the nurses never limited my visits. They let me stay around the clock. The nurses remarked how everyone was so taken when they saw us together. They knew how deeply we cared for each other.

For two months I had tried so hard to get Hugh's mother to visit from Cuba. I knew he was dying and his only wish was to hug and kiss his mother again.

On April 15, Hugh knew his time was near, and we were waiting every minute for the phone to ring. We knew there were three flights arriving in Miami from Third World countries that day. After two months of paperwork we were praying she would be on one of those flights.

Hugh seemed to be clinging to life, just hoping she would come. Around 8:30 a.m., Hugh had his first experience with death. The nurses tried everything to sustain life but his blood pressure dropped to zero. One nurse turned to me and said, "He's gone." I became very emotional and bent down to his head, telling him how much I loved him and promised to hug and kiss his mother for him.

Then the nurse said, "I'm getting a pressure," he had pulled back to life. The nurse said to me, "No medicine brought him back, you did that." Hugh remained stable but very weak until 12:30 a.m., then pretty much the same thing happened, and again he pulled back to life. We realized now that the day was over and his mother hadn't arrived. There were no more flights for three days. I knew by then that he had lost hope of seeing his mother again.

He quietly wept for two hours. This was the first time he had cried through four months of a very cruel and painful death. At 3:15 a.m., he was resting quietly and I was completely exhausted. I hadn't slept for three days and nights. I remember telling him that I loved him.

I lay my head on the bedrail and he was holding my hand so very tightly. At 3:20 a.m. the nurse came rapidly into the room and I woke up realizing I had dozed off for five minutes. I asked her if she was there to check his pressure, and she answered, "He's gone." He was still holding my hand so very tightly. I realized then that he had seen me get upset twice that day and he had just slipped quietly away so as not to awaken me. This was his last act of love.

I walked through the funeral like it was a terrible nightmare and I really wasn't there. My friends and family were very supportive and Reverend White of MCC gave him a beautiful service.

For the next month all I knew was that I had to meet his family. I wrote and called everyone for help. FInally Congressman E. Clay Shaw helped me apply to all the right offices and I got a Cuban visa. I telegrammed Hugh's parents and asked them to telegraph their clothing sizes, since I was able to bring 441 pounds of luggage. They answered right away and I spent every cent I could get my hands on, buying them new things I knew they could never get in Cuba. I was able to sell Hugh's new cycle for $700, so I had that money to take with me.

I left for Cuba on May 22, the day after Radio Marti started. At the airport the suspense was very high, with every news channel there. Channel 7 interviewed me and asked if I wasn't afraid that I would not be able to get out the next week. I told them the love I felt in my heart for Hugh's family was stronger than the fear I was feeling. After transporting the entire plan load of passengers across the terminal to a different plane, we finally left for Havana. It seems that there had been a bomb scare. As the plane departed, I closed my eyes and put myself in God's hands.

When we arrived in Havana, we were escorted by soldiers with rifles into old buses with armed guards at every exit. I remember then thinking how it felt I was being taken to prison rather than into an airport terminal. After being questioned for two hours I was allowed to enter the country. They forced me to pay for a hotel in Havana, even though I was going to Cardenas to visit my friend's family. I paid for the hotel and went into the terminal to get my luggage. The luggage was all thrown in a big pile; all you could do was crawl over it and look for your bags.

The terminal was completely empty and I was

AIDS Update

ACTIONS

MEDICAL ADVANCE

San Antonio--In a development which could lead to a vaccine against AIDS, Texas researchers have synthesized a portion of the virus linked with AIDS. This could be a first step in the shaping of a vaccine and better tests to diagnose the actual disease. Measures are now being taken to determine if the synthetic protein produced could protect people against AIDS.

Mice and rabbits have already been injected to see if the protein material elicits antibodies against HTLV-III, the virus thought to cause AIDS. If any antibodies do end up neutralizing the HTLV-III virus, chimpanzees are next in line, possibly as early as November. But because of the long incubation period for AIDS, it could take more than a year to see if tested animals develop an infection, according to Dr. Gordon Dreesman of the Southwest Foundation for Biomedic Research in San Antonio, the lab working on the protein.

If all goes well with the chimpanzees US Food and Drug Administration approved testing on humans at high risk for developing AIDS could come as early as 1987.

DIAGNOSIS

Atlanta--A tongue sore first identified in San Francisco at the beginning of the AIDS epidemic four years ago has been found to be an early indicator of the lethal infection, federal officials said recently.

The national Centers for Disease Control (CDC) in Atlanta said "this newly reported lesion" is an important diagnostic tool for health-care providers in early recognition and treatment of AIDS.

Known as hairy leukoplakia, the sore, or lesion, was seen for the first time in San Francisco AIDS patients in 1981, the CDC said. Since then it has been reported in AIDS patients examined in Los Angeles, Baltimore, Ann Arbor (MI), and in Paris, Copenhagen and London.

The health agency said oral viral hairy leukoplakia appears as raised white areas of thickening on the tongue and has a "hairy" appearance. In examining the lesion, scientists have found other infectious agents on the surface of the sore, including the fungus candida and the viruses papilloma (an oral wart), herpes and Epstein-Barr.

The CDC said that from October, 1981, to June this year, 13 of 123 patients with hairy leukoplakia seen in San Francisco were also diagnosed as having AIDS. Twenty others later developed the disease, and 78 of the 123 tested positive for antibodies to the AIDS virus HLTV-III-LAV.

RESEARCH

Scotland--A report in the August 3 *Lancet* suggests research done on a group of hemophiliacs shows the HTLV-III virus may only infect people whose immune systems are already suppressed. The report strongly contradicts the theory developed by researchers in France and America that helper\suppressor ratios are directly caused by infection with HTLV-III. Of 33 hemophiliacs rested in Scotland, only half showed any signs of infection, according to the report.

ARTIFICIAL INSEMINATION

San Francisco--Research has begun in two cities to try and determine if women who have been artificially inseminated can acquire AIDS, according to the New York *Times*

Continue on next page

Concern about the possibility followed reports from Australia about four women who received sperm from a man who had been exposed to the AIDS virus. All of the women were inseminated in 1982, and while doctors say it is unlikely that any of the four will develop AIDS, one does have swollen lymph glands. The other three are said to be in good health. AIDS researcher Dr. Jerome Goopman said women who have been inseminated in the past with semen from a man known to be in one of the high risk groups should take the HTLV-III test as a precaution. In San Francisco, a project is underway to study lesbians who have been artificially inseminated. The reason for studying lesbians, said a spokesperson is because of the relatively low heterosexual contact.

STATISTICS

New York--The latest figures from the World Health Organization on AIDS shows 1,255 new cases in Europe through July of this year, according to the *Native*. WHO said that until recently, European cases paralleled the US pattern in that 70 percent of the cases were confirmed in homosexual and bisexual men. However, researchers in Brussels have documented a significant number of new cases in heterosexual men and women who had contact with the disease in central Africa. The countries hardest hit are France, Belgium, England, West Germany, Switzerland, and the Netherlands.

MORE STATISTICS

Chicago--Possible 20 percent of the gay males in Chicago have been exposed to the virus antibodies associated with AIDS, according to recent figures reported in *GayLife*. In addition, approximately 40 to 45 percent of gay men participating in volunteer studies in Chicago have tested positive to HTLV-III.

Dr. Greg Shipman, medical director of the Howard Brown Memorial Clinic, said Chicago's rate of exposure for gay men is around 20 to 25 percent, according to one recent random sample from around the city. This is up from last year's 12 percent, according to Dr. David Ostrow of Northwestern Hospital.

GOVERNMENT ACTION

Chicago--Dr. K. T. Reddi of the Chicago Department of Health announced the availability of $150,000 in community development block grant funds for local, state, federal or non-profit agencies who develop a comprehensive plan for providing medical and psychological services to persons with AIDS. Reddi said, according to *GayLife*, the money was little more than "a drop in the bucket" of what is needed and that most of the sum should be used to generate more money to combat the deadly disease.

State Health Director Bernard Turnock announced AIDS funding bills and related measures on the state level will shortly be signed by Governor James Thompson.

Dr. David Ostrow of the AIDS Task Force announced that the Chicago Public Library will soon decide on measures to brief librarians on AIDS and to provide them with up-to-date statistics and material in order to adequately handle questions that may come from the general public.

ORGANIZATIONAL ACTION

Washington--The US Conference of Mayors has awarded $145,000 to help pay for educational projects in eight cities: Nashville, Denver, Miami, Seattle, Detroit, San Francisco, Berkeley (CA), and Portland (OR). The announcement was made August 11. Included in the awards is money for a "safe-sex musical" for the AIDS project in Denver, aimed at gay male bars.

GOVERNMENT NON-ACTION

Sacramento--The California State Senate failed by two votes to

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I promised...

Continued from page 10

starting to think that Hugh's family had left, thinking I wasn't on the plane. I finally found all three of my bags and went to customs. Luckily, the girl spoke English. She asked why I was there. I told her my best friend had died and I promised to kiss and hug his mother and that I intended to do just that! She smiled and didn't even look in my bags. What a relief, as I had been warned not to bring anything into the country for the citizens there. My bags were full of women's clothes for his mother and sister.

I walked outside to the street. No wonder the terminal was empty; everyone was waiting on the street. I was surrounded by hundreds of Cubans looking for their families. They looked mighty surprised to see one crazy American arriving. Through all those people I saw the faces of Hugh's family. It was as though I wasn't seeing with my own eyes. I realized later that Hugh was with me, seeing his loving family again. It was as though I had known them my entire life. I hugged and kissed them all. I felt like I was home.

They took me 50 miles to their home in a 1951 Chevrolet taxi. I remember getting out of the taxi into the dirt street and looking at the shacks they call houses. Hugh's family treated me like family. There was so much love in that little house, I didn't notice how terribly they had to live. All the things we take for granted are real luxuries in Cuba. They had very few linens, dishes, etc. There was no hot water and no soap. There was no toilet paper -- only old newspaper. They had no toilet seat, shower curtain, and the house had no windows except for an opening in the front with wooden shutters. None of the houses had glass windows or any kind of screens. Hugh's father had wired the electricity himself, so there were wires running everywhere.

I remember trying to sleep that morning. It was 95 degrees and there were no fans or ventilation. There were flies everywhere. As I lay sweating on that lumpy old bed I realized why Hugh had always been so grateful for anything I gave him.

His family was so proud of me. The neighbors were all coming in to greet me. I noticed many of the women were bringing containers with ice. I went to the kitchen to see why. The kitchen looked like it hadn't had anything new since 1950. The old refrigerator was standing in the corner with the door opened and unplugged. These poor people were living in all that heat with no fans and not even any ice or cold drinks.

I inquired how to get to a store where I could spend dollars. After taking a horse and cart taxi and a bus, I arrived in Valadedo Beach. There I saw a completely different Cuba. This is the Cuba which tourists saw -- many big hotels and restaurants. Although it was a very pretty resort, it was obvious there had not been any improvements since the 1950s when Castro took over.

In a store, I saw a refrigerator for only $300. The guy said he would deliver it right away for $30. I spent another $270 of Hugh's money to buy his family four large fans, shampoo, soap and many other things I knew they hadn't had for years. When I arrived back at the house, the men were just unloading the new refrigerator. Hugh's mother was weeping, saying she hadn't had a refrigerator for three years and she was convinced she would never have another one. They were all like little kids at Christmas time, dressed in their new clothes and so excited about all the other things. I'm sure Hugh was there smiling down on them. This was to be my last happy time in Cuba.

The police arrived and took me in for questioning. They had traced the hospital records I had sent when I was trying to get Hugh's mother out of the country. The records stated he was being treated under suspicion of AIDS, and they also stated that he was a homosexual. This alone is a criminal offense in Cuba.

They questioned me for hours, asking if I was gay and what was my relationship with Hugh. I managed to stay calm and didn't admit to anything. They finally took me back to the house and said they would return in the morning for me. I prayed all night. I thought I'd never get home again. I had spent almost all the money I had taken, so my hope of getting out to a third country was gone. You have to pay by cash and only in dollars. There is no way to wire money there.

After that it got worse. They took me to a clinic where for two days a team of five doctors examined me. They had me staying at a hotel across from the clinic; it was now Saturday morning and my return flight was not until Tuesday morning. I had made friends with the hotel clerk, who was very nice and, I suspect, also gay. He told me he had heard a health official talking and they were going to put me in quarantine. He advised me to leave earlier than scheduled if possible, because they might hold me in quarantine for months.

Then I remembered the phone number for the Swiss Embassy that Congressman Shaw had given me. I called and explained my situation. The woman there told me that there was another tour agency owned by the same company as the one who had booked me.

Continued on next page

It was two miles from my hotel, and I walked there. The woman who ran the agency was one of the nicest persons I had ever met. She must have sensed my fear and she was very understanding.

She told me she had a Swiss tour leaving from Valadedo airport that night at 3 a.m. She told me since my passport was blue, and very similar to the Swiss passports, that she might be able to help me get out. Since this was a small airport and it was a tour group, the immigration official would probably take all the passports at one time and stamp them. She didn't think he would notice mine being from the United States.

I returned to the hotel and told my friend at the desk of my good luck. He said whatever I do, don't check out because the hotel had been instructed to call immigration if I tried to leave. Luckily my room was only on the second floor and I didn't have any luggage to bring back. I had only one small shoulder bag to worry about, and as able to leave quietly by climbing down a vine.

The departure was just as the travel agent had said. No one even noticed me except the Swiss tourists who were eyeing me very suspiciously. When the wheels of the plane lifted from the runway, my heart returned to its normal rate and I knew I was on my way home.

Sunday evening when I arrived home, the letter from the medical examiner's office was in the mailbox. My worst fears were now real -- Hugh had died from AIDS.

Having met Hugh one week after he arrived from Cuba, I knew he loved me but I never tried to stop him from seeing our gay lifestyle. After seeing Cuba, I realize how beautiful and free our bars and clubs must have looked to him. He enjoyed 5 1/2 years of living here free. The only thing was that he missed his family so much.

He always made me feel loved and very special. He never gave me any reason to be jealous. So now the beautiful gay life he so loved, has cost him his. I only hope and pray he had enough happiness in his short life. We should all pray for a cure for this terrible killer among us, and above all never forget the brothers who have already suffered and died for no real reason. If God meant this as a punishment for my being gay, he really has succeeded, for I have lost the most beautiful thing that ever happened in my life.

Sincerely, Larry

Note: Larry is a member of MCC of the Holy Spirit, Fort Lauderdale, where the Rev'd John Gill is pastor. His letter was published as a response to a tribute to Hugh printed in the local press. We share it with you for your thoughts and prayers. --Editor

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Thursday, October 10

"It is a sin for a person who knows what is right to fail to do it." There you go again with that sin business. But I guess you're not too worried about the wrong things I do. You seem to be more interested that I do what's right. I always thought sin was those things I did, like dancing or going to the movies. Or those thought I had about that beautiful...never mind. I'll be patient like the farmer, and let my relationship grow with you. I'll quit looking for a rule book, or instant crops.

Friday, October 11

"...whoever is not against us is for us." (Mark 9:40) Yes, Jesus, it's easy for you to say. But what about those people who have wrong doctrine, or don't use inclusive language, or somehow just don't measure up? Should we just ignore them? What? You want us to love them? Isn't that a bit much?

Saturday, October 12

"For everyone will be salted with fire." (Mark 9:49) First pain, then patience, now fire! I know that's going to hurt. I'll bet even the metal hates the refiner's fire. All right, so I'll go through this, so my flavor will be enhanced. But I'm not going to like this very much. Will you walk through this with me? Please?

Sunday, October 13

PENTECOST 20
Genesis 2:18–24
James Hebrews 1:1–4, 2:9–11
Mark 10:2–16

Monday, October 14

"It is not good that the human being should be alone" (Genesis 2:18) Now you've said something I quite readily agree with. I know about loneliness. And I like the idea that you will "make a companion" for me. I just hope you understand that I have a few ideas about that companion. I'm not real picky. But may I suggest a few details? I hope you also understand that my orientation may have something to do with the companion I'm hoping for. You do? Great! Now about the details...

Tuesday, October 15

"Companion" (Genesis 2:18) What a wonderful word. I've always used "lover" or "spouse" or "mate." But this word intrigues me. "The one with

Friday, November 1

"Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you." (Mark 10:35). Those sons of Zebedee weren't dumb. They knew exactly what they wanted. And so do I. So will you do exactly what I ask? After all, you did say, "Ask, and you shall receive." Oh, you mean you get to choose what we get? We just get to ask? And sometimes what we ask for is bad for us, and you'll give us something good instead? Obviously you're not listening to me...

Saturday, November 2

"Whoever would be first among you must be slave of all." (Mark 10:44) Whoa, there. I don't like this "slave" talk. That means giving up my personhood for everyone else, and that's just not where I'm at. You mean I don't even find my per- sonhood until I give it away? But I thought I already knew who I was, and what I wanted to do, and what was the best for me. Well, I guess you know better. So how do I become a "slave"?





How to use this section . . .

First, remove the center pages from your magazine. Then cut them in half on the fold. Place pages 17–18 inside 15–16, and fold in half. Now you have a folder to place inside your Bible or keep by your bedside. To follow through the booklet, use the page indications at the bottom of your new pages, beginning with "a".

Prayer Reminder



Make your notes below



We share these daily thoughts with you in hopes you will use them as a springboard for your daily reading. The devotions are based on the Sunday readings in the Inclusive Lectionary.

Sunday, October 6

PENTECOST 19
Job 42:1–6
James 4:13–17, 5:7–11
Mark 9:38–50

Monday, October 7

"I know that you can do all things" (Job 42:1) Sure, we know that you can do it all, God. But we're not quite ready to trust you with every- thing yet. So we'll just hold on to a few things we can do just a little better. So what it the pain hurts? At least we know why we hurt; we're the ones hanging on to it.

Tuesday, October 8

"I have uttered what I did not understand" (Job 42:3) Yes, I've had all the answers. But I'm beginning to learn that my answers don't always work. So maybe it's time to listen to you, and to follow you on this journey. So I "repent in dust and ashes." I'll let go of the pain, and risk the unknown. After all, I do know you...at least a little.

Wednesday, October 9

"...you do not know about tomorrow." (James 4:13) That's just it, God. I want to know what lies ahead. I get nervous when I can't see the center line in the road! It's easy for James to say, "If the Sovereign wills, we shall live and we shall do this or that." I admit it's not easy for me.

Saturday, October 19

"For to such belongs the realm of God." (Mark 10:14) I like this, because I like to dream and to play and to "have no cares in the world." But I don't know if I can make it work. You see, they always told me, "Grow up." And I've been working so hard at it, that it's a little hard to go in reverse now. But maybe I can start by simply trusting you. Oh, that's what you mean?

Sunday, October 20

PENTECOST 21
Genesis 3:8–19
Hebrews 4:1–3, 9–13
Mark 10:17–30

Monday, October 21

"They heard the sound of God walking in the garden." (Genesis 3:8) What a relationship to have with you, to be able to just walk with you and talk with you, and know you're right there. They really blew it! But what about me? Will you join me in the "cool of the day"? Let's take a garden stroll. I have some things I want to share with you.

Tuesday, October 22

"I was afraid, because I was naked." (Genesis 3:10) Yes, I know that feeling, too. Sometimes I feel so exposed. And I'm not even sure I like the looks of my body, either. But I guess I still stand naked before you. You really do see the real me. Let me see me like you see me, and maybe I'll like what I see a lot better...and I'll quit being afraid.



"Thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumphal procession in Christ and through us spreads everywhere the fragrance of the knowledge of God." **2 Corinthians 2:14**

Wednesday, October 23

"For good news came to us." (Hebrews 4:2) Thank you for the good news. There's so much bad news around. But your love for me is so good, even when I'm slow to respond. Help me to make my news "good news" and to share it with others.

Thursday, October 24

Let us therefore strive to enter that rest" (Hebrews 4:11) Now how I can I work and rest at the same time? "All are open and laid bare to the eyes of the one with whom we have to do." (Hebrews 4:13) You mean all I have to do is be open with you, and you'll give me rest?

Friday, October 25

"Go, sell what you have, and give to the poor." (Mark 10:21) Isn't that a little stiff? The poor guy was keeping the commandments. I know, just like I'm always trying to do stuff. And what you want is for us to be "giving" people, "losing" ourselves to "find" ourselves and things like that. No wonder the young ruler went away so sad. It isn't always easy to keep on giving.

Saturday, October 26

"...for my sake and the for gospel" (Mark 10:29) I thought if we kept on giving, we'd finally run out. But you tell us that the more we give, the more we receive. That sounds like a real bargain! What? If we quit giving, we quit receiving? Then I'd better not think of this as such a selfish bargain, and think of myself as a "channel" instead.

Sunday, October 27

PENTECOST 22
Isaiah 53:7–12
Hebrews 4:14–16
Mark 10:35–45

Monday, October 28

"The servant did not say a word." (Isaiah 53:7) Can you imagine doing through all that, and not even complaining once? I could never do it. That's why Jesus did it for me? You're right, I would never have made it on my own. And I'd be having a lot to say, too. You know my big mouth.

Tuesday, October 29

"The will of God shall prosper in the servant's hand." (Isaiah 53:10) It seems that Jesus did your will, and he was lifted up high. It wasn't all suffering and pain. The end result was pretty good. "Therefore God exalted him to the highest place..." (Philippians 2:9) Is this what happens to us in the final act? Will we be exalted with Christ if we do your will? That makes the everyday pains seem rather temporary.

Wednesday, October 30



"We have a great high priest" (Hebrews 4:14) Yes, a really great one, and "not a high priest who is unable to sympathise with our weaknesses." He's been there before us, and knows all about temptation. He knows what we're going through, having successfully done it. So maybe our high priest will give us a little help in all this.

Thursday, October 31

"Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16) How nice to know we can approach the throne without fear and trembling. How nice to be assured that will can "find grace to help in time of need." Sometimes I'm afraid to really believe it, because it's altogether too simple. But that's what "grace" is all about, isn't it? A free gift freely given?

f

whom I break bread." That almost makes breakfast a sacramental moment. Let me break bread and share the cup of love with someone special.

Wednesday, October 16

"In many and various ways God spoke of old..." (Hebrews 1:1) But, you know, I'm convinced that you only speak one way now...the way you speak to me. The rest of them are probably hearing other voices. I mean, I know the truth! What? You mean truth is something we know, but Someone revealed to us? And you still reveal Yourself to each person at their point on need? And this means you still speak in various ways? Oops.

Thursday, October 17

Jesus "reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of God's nature." (Hebrews 1:3) So this is the One who is the Truth. And it's because of your reflection, the stamp of your nature. Is it possible that you can "stamp" me, too. I really need it. You say Jesus was made "perfect through suffering"? I thought you could just go zap...and I'd have it all. Guess this is going to take more time than I thought.

C

Friday, October 18

I really don't want to talk about divorce. (Mark 10:2–12) Some of us didn't know what we were doing when we got married. And some of us have "broken up" with a companion. Life sometimes seems to be so fragile, and we're so foolish. And sometimes the Law seems so rigid. Could you give us a little grace, and help us grow? Maybe we can make relationships work yet.





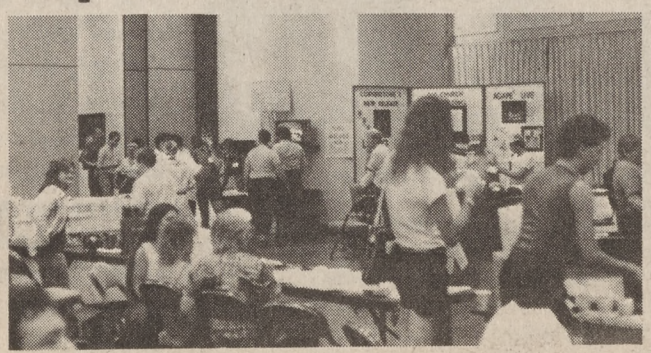
The District Coordinators concelebrated the Eucharist at the Monday morning opening service, led by the Rev'd David Pellitier, Northwest District.

Journey photo



'Free To Be,' the Conference theme, was richly expressed in the many exciting worship services through the week's celebration.

Journey photo



People gathered during free moments in the 'Country Store' area to visit shops set up by various churches and organizations, and to sit and talk with friends. Journey photo

General Conference

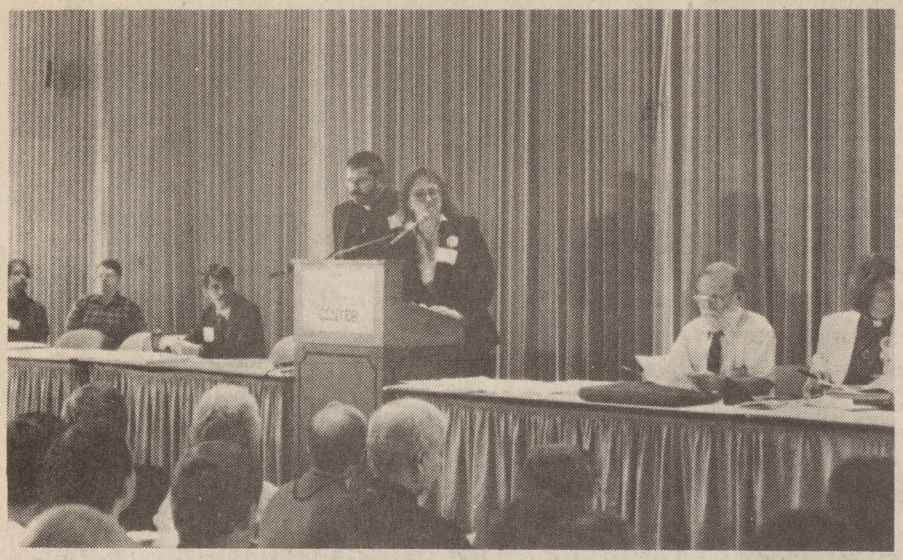
Continued from page 9

My first reaction was to the warmth and concern of our Fellowship leaders. I was not used to the hierarchy of any organization being so familiar with the members but I soon realized that I was dealing with PEOPLE people. Meeting and speaking with the Elders increased the respect that I had already acquired for them as I'd read the Elder's. It was nice to finally have faces to go along with the names that I had heard repeated over the last few months. And, seriously, in how many organizations do you get a big bear hug from the Founder! I hope that even when General Conference attendance reaches 20,000 that we will not lose our people-centeredness.

Then there were the business meetings. Is it possible for business meetings to be an inspiration to anyone? They were to me! I developed a real sense of pride for our Fellowship as I watched Christians, clergy and lay, come together in unity from all over the world on the tiniest aspects of our by-laws. Even after several minutes of discussion on just one or two lines, people were given the time to state their concerns in an atmosphere of respect and love. I could really see God's Spirit at work and it was beautiful!

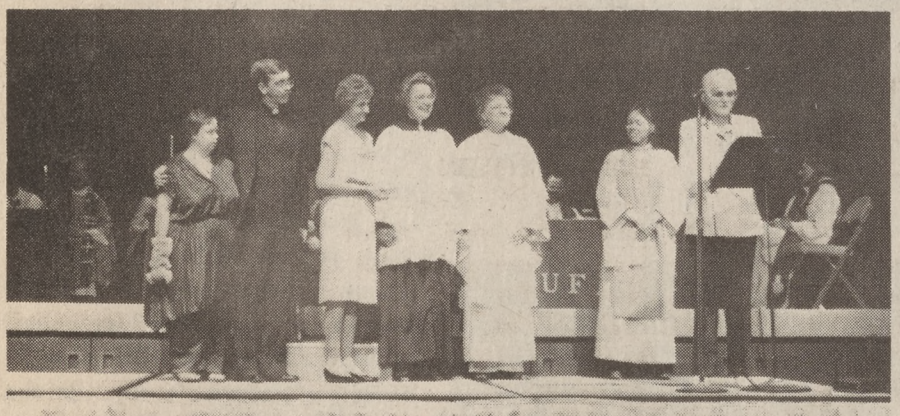
That first day in Sacramento there was lots of hugging and kissing. I envied people who had been in the Fellowship long enough to make many friends. My envy lasted for less than a day. By the end of the week, I had made so many acquaintances and friendships of my own that I laughed as I thought back to my initial feelings. I will always treasure the times of personal fellowship and learning that I spent with the different people that I met.

Continued on next page



The business meeting move forward under the direction of the Rev'd Elder Troy Perry, moderator, assisted by the Rev'd Elder Nancy Wilson, clerk.

Journey photo



The Rev'd Nancy Radclyffe (center, in cassock and surplice) is one of many persons ordained during the traditional service on Saturday.

Journey photo

General Conference

Continued on page 19

The workshops and forums were a special experience for me because I finally found out what all those Committees, Commissions, and Boards were about. Faith, Fellowship, and Order did an especially good job with their workshop presentations on "Vocabularies of Faith," "Vocabularies of Sexuality," and "Sexuality and Spirituality." My only complaint was that they were too short! I really got into the small discussion groups and listening to each other share. I am excited that our Fellowship is so committed to a grassroots theology and cannot wait to see where that commitment will lead.

Thursday was dedicated to workshops and speakers on the subject of AIDS. The Rev'd Stephen Pieters gave one of the most powerful statements on AIDS that I have ever heard. He is a person with AIDS who, because of an experimental form of treatment, appears for the present time to be cured. We shared in his pain as he recounted the rollercoaster emotions that he experienced during the early days after discovering the disease and of the varied reactions he received from those inside and outside of the Fellowship. Mr. Pieters' message was filled with hope; we rejoiced with him as he told us of his recent test results: Tcell ratio has doubled, no sign of Kaposi Sarcoma lesions, lymph gland biopsy is clean, lymph node swelling has disappeared, bone marrow is without any tumor, and the HTLVIII has disappeared from his blood! We experienced his joyful victory as he shared God's revelation to him. "Every time we celebrate communion, we celebrate the fact that not even death can separate us from the love of God

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AIDS

Continued from page 12

override a gubernatorial veto of increased funding for AIDS research. According to the *Advocate*, the attempt was made July 15. A spokesperson said that the attempt was "only the first." The Senate has 60 days, or until the end of August, to override the veto.

GOVERNMENT RE-ACTION

Sacramento--An urgency measure by Senate President David Roberti which would replace part of the $11.6 million in funds vetoed from the State Budget by Governor Deukmejian for AIDS programs was approved on August 23 on a bipartisan vote of 31-2.

"The growing statistics are all most of us ever see of any person who contracts AIDS," Roberti said in his floor statement. "We must look beyond the statistics and understand that AIDS is not going to be dealt with effectively until all levels of state and local government join in efforts to address AIDS in a responsive and responsible manner."

It was reported that a compromise was being worked on by the legislative and executive branches, and that the appropriation might be reduced to between $5 and $6 million. The bill includes provisions for home health aides, attendants, and hospice care to patients during acute phases of their illness.

TEAR CAUTION

Atlanta--The Centers for Disease Control issued recommendations this week for avoiding the transmission of AIDS through tears, according to the Chicago *Tribune*. Doctors performing eye exams--and other health professionals working with patients' eyes--should wash their hands and keep instruments and trial-fitting contact lenses disinfected, the agency said. Also, gloves should be worn when possible, but masks are not necessary. The virus has been found in blood, saliva, and tears, but there is no evidence the disease is ever transmitted through tears, said the CDC. A National Eye Institute scientist has reportedly found the HTLV-III virus in the tears of a 33-year-old female AIDS patient. According to the New York *Native*, scientists said it is highly unlikely the fragile virus is able to survive transmission through tears.

REACTIONS

PUBLIC OPINION

New York--More than half of the American people believe AIDS ranks with cancer and heart disease as the most serious diseases and believe it can be transmitted by casual contact, a New York *Times*-CBS poll said. More than 25 percent believe children with AIDS should not be allowed in school, according to the poll.

AIDS-infected children in school has become an issue in new York, where thousands of children in Queens are being kept home to protest a decision to allow a 7-year-old with AIDS to attend classes.

The controversy grew when the superintendent's office said five school employees, including "some" teachers and a food service worker are on medical leave because of AIDS and that three employees died of the disease last year.

BAD OPINION

New York--The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York August 29 withdrew plans to shelter AIDS patients in a former convent because parishioners threatened to keep children from attending a parochial school next door, according to the New York *Times*.

The Rev'd Kenneth J. Smith, pastor of the Holy Name of Jesus Church, told his parish on Sunday that he was "saddened" by "the attitude of rejection." The reaction of the people opposing the shelter was the final determining factor to stop the AIDS care plan,

Continue on next page

which had been announced just one week earlier. A church official said a new site was being investigated, but he would not reveal where because of fears of more opposition.

Speaking to the parish where more than 400 people signed a petition in opposition to the shelter, Fr. Smith said: "The church has an obligation to serve the neediest. Wherever there is a victim of AIDS, Jesus Christ is there. Each of us has a choice of being a true Christian or a Christian in lip service only." Some parishioners did back the shelter, noting the tradition the church has had with programs for alcoholics, drug addicts, and the homeless.

SAFE SEX ATTITUDES

San Francisco--A recent study by the San Francisco AIDS foundation shows eight out of 10 men have adopted "safe sex" methods as a way of stopping the continuing spread of AIDS. According to the *Bay Area Report* the study was conducted among 500 gay and bisexual men who were interviewed at length about their sexual partners, and their own sexual behavior. According to the study, respondents having more than one sexual partner have dropped from 49 percent to 36 percent.

FEAR

Rio de Janeiro-- Health officials in Rio are concerned that American gay men attending "Rio Carnival" in February, 1986, may spread the AIDS virus, writes the Washington *Blade*. A spokesperson for the health ministry said officials plan to meet next week to discuss the situation. So far, 383 Brazilians have died from AIDS this year. The spokesperson went on to say, "We will examine some form of control if possible...although I think we may not be able to decide on a workable and non-discriminatory system."

MORE FEAR

Sydney--Australia's two airlines announced on July 22 plans to refuse to carry known AIDS sufferers. The *Advocate* states the ban will remain in effect until aviation develops guidelines for handling persons with AIDS. The issues came to public attention after one of the airlines, Ansett, refused to carry a prisoner with AIDS.

YET MORE FEAR

Rocco Imperiale--About 100 residents of this small coastal town have asked the mayor to prohibit the national Italian gay organization ARCI-Gay from holding a conference on AIDS. The Washington *Blade* said the town residents fear gays will "spread AIDS." The mayor is on record as being sympathetic, but has so far refused to block the meeting.

DENTAL FEAR

Los Angeles--According to representatives from AIDS resource centers in New York Los Angeles, San Francisco, and other cities, it is far more difficult for persons with AIDS in those cities to find dental care than medical care, report the Los Angeles *Times*. "This is occurring despite the fact that dental schools and associations claim that treatment of AIDS can be low-risk if certain precautions are observed," such as wearing gloves, the *Times* notes. Studies showing that no health care workers have contracted the disease (unless already in a high risk group) have done little to offset healthcare workers' fears.

INSTILLED FEAR

Chicago--Several gay men in Chicago have received a phone call from a man identifying himself as an employee of the Federal Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, informing them they have AIDS and advising them to contact the Howard Brown Memorial Clinic. However, the CDC said they have no

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Resources 'n Ideas

The Diaconate:
A Full and Equal Order
By James M. Barnett
The Seabury Press

The Deacon in the Church
Past and Future
Edward P. Echlin, S.J.
Alba House, New York

There is a quest in the universal church to restore the ancient order of deacon. Of course, many churches, including UFMCC, have deacons. But as many churches as have deacons also have as many different ideas about what deacons should be doing. That's even true in UFMCC, where we have "ana-baptist" deacons and "catholic" deacons, and "prebyterian-elder" deacons. Is this variety or confusion? Who knows!

Perhaps the best place to understand the diaconate is to look at its historical roots. And the two books here recommended are a good starting place. The smaller book, **The Deacon in the Church: Past and Future**, gives a fairly compact history of the diaconate, and is written from a Roman Catholic viewpoint. **The Diaconate: A Full and Equal Order** gives a more detailed and scholarly history, and is written from an Anglican viewpoint. Both books discuss the present-day implications of the restoration of the diaconate.

Both authors are confronted with a large segment of the church which limits the diaconate to males. Echlin points out in his book, however, that "Only when women are welcomed to the diaconate will the ministry of service be itself fully reconciled to the wholeness of humanity." Barnett refers to several women in the Bible who engaged in *diakonia*, though he does not take up the modern question at any length. Of course, we in UFMCC have already moved beyond that point, but it is well to note that the authors tend to write with respect to the "male-bias" that is in their respective churches. Some adjustments need to be made in the reading and comprehension of the books.

Both authors extend the *diakonia* to all laypeople, and indeed to clergy as well. It is important to know that we are all called to service. Yet they would see an order of "servant-minister" in the church as valuable today. Perhaps we have at times discovered the value by practice experience in our own churches.

Both books are worth investigating, if you are looking for for the training of your deacons and deacon candidates. It's always good for deacons to know "where we've come from."

Please note: The appropriate name for an individual service-minister is **deacon**. If deacons are referred to as a group, they are the **diaconate**, never the deaconate or the deaconite, as is sometimes seen.



"With apologise to an unsuspecting C.C.C.C."

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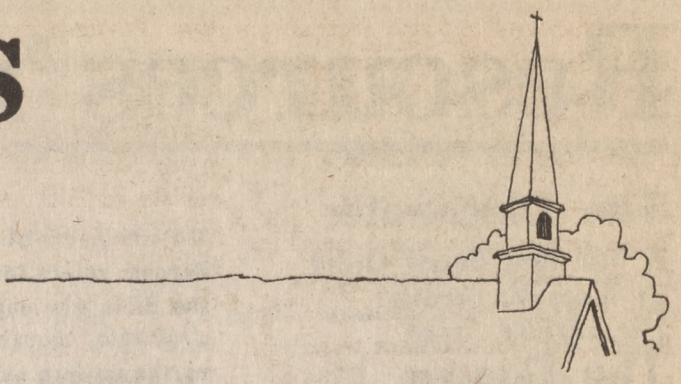
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Churches & People



Gifts workshop held

Milwaukee--Mr. Peter Helt, a member of All Gods Children MCC in Minneapolis MN facilitated a workshop on Spiritual Gifts at MCC Omaha, Nebraska. The workshop was well attended and many grew to an understanding of their own spiritual gifts.

Peter "is a very gifted teacher," according to the Rev'd Bonnie Daniel, Mid-Central District Coordinator. He has made himself available to facilitate a variety of workshops within the District among which include, church growth, spiritual gifts, and lay leadership.

Renewal conducted

Wichita--The Rev'd Nancy Radclyffe, chaplain of the Spiritual Life and Clergy Care Center, conducted a series of workshops at MCC Wichita Kansas on August 23-25. The workshops focused on the themes of forgiveness and healing. Ms. Radclyffe was newly ordained into the UFMCC during this past General Conference in Sacramento.

Author feted in services

Carbondale--MCC of Southern Illinois held a three day Spiritual Renewal in early July. Guest speaker for the renewal was the evangelist and author Sylvia Pennington from Los Angeles. Formerly an anti-gay activist, Ms. Pennington has since changed her position and has specialized in travelling to small groups throughout the United States and Canada with a message of affirmation, love, and acceptance. Her recently published book entitled, "But Lord, They're Gay " illustrates her personal transformation. The Rev'd Reid L. Christensen, pastor of this congregation, reports that the renewal was very successful and Ms. Pennington and her accompanying musical vocalist, Jerry Browning were well received by all.

10th Anniversary slated

Des Moines--MCC Des Moines will celebrate its Tenth Anniversary October 18-20. Some of the highlights of the weekend include a workshop Saturday morning on Human Sexuality facilitated by District Coordinator Bonnie Daniel and a musical worship service on Saturday evening. In addition, the Rev'd Elder Don Eastman will join them for the weekend celebrations, leading them in worship on Sunday.

Float is award winner

Vancouver--Vancouver BC celebrated its Gay/Lesbian Pride Festival the latter part of July. There was a parade and MCC Vancouver's float won a prize for "Best Entry For A Non-Profit Organization. The float design was co-ordinated with the Festival Theme "Where the Rainbow Begins".

Rev'd Ernest Lacasse, pastor of MCC Vancouver, and Penny Gordon, who was instrumental in designing this year's entry, accepted the award, a trophy and a plaque. According to Mr. Lacasse they are planning for a bigger and better entry in 1986 when Pride Festival will celebrate alongside EXPO 86, the World Exposition.

DC tours Illinois churches

Southern Illinois--Newly elected District Coordinator of the Great Lakes District, the Rev'd La Paula Turner, recently visited several churches in central and southern Illinois.

Ms. Turner's first visit, on Friday, August 9, was with MCC of Southern Illinois (Carbondale). A carry-in dinner was held at the Interfaith Center at 6:00 pm with a Worship Service following at 8:00 pm. She answered questions about the District as well as new bylaw changes that affect local churches in dialogue around the dinner tables. Her visit provided MCC of Southern Illinois an opportunity to share their vision of the Fellowship according to Pastor Reid Christenson.

The District Coordinator next visited MCC Peoria on Saturday, August 10, joining in a picnic with the congregation, in a time of sharing. The Rev'd Hal Hasse is pastor.

On Sunday, August 11, Ms. Turner met with the coordinating committee for the Spring 1986 Great Lakes District Conference, which will be held in Springfield. She also preached in the evening

worship service of Faith Eternal MCC (Springfield), where the Rev'd **William 'Bill' Smith** is pastor.

Dallas center dedicated

Dallas--The MCC in Dallas, Texas, celebrated a milestone in its 15 year history by dedicating its new Activity Center building. The Rev'd Elder Don Eastman was assisted at the July 21 ribbon-cutting by Dallas City Councilwoman Lori Palmer. Ms. Palmer thanked the gathered congregants for their support, and for the spiritual, social, and religious values they have imparted to the gay and lesbian communities in Dallas. She emphasized the important role the MCC has played in promoting understanding among all peoples.

The Rite of Blessing was performed on the new building by Elder Eastman, and he praised the congregation for its contributions and prayers. A Preview Party the previous day had raised approximately $2000 for furnishings for the building. Elder Eastman promised to utilize the new building for the growth of the congregation and further outreach.

TV ministry grows

Louisville--For the past several months, MCC Louisville has sponsored a TV program on Dimension Channel 18, at 6:30 pm on Sundays. The ministry has met with very positive feedback according to **Ms. Dee Dale-French**, pastoral leader of MCC Louisville.

Beginning in the month of June they expanded the ministry to include the whole county. Their first county tape was aired on June 18, 1985.

Texas church honors own

San Antonio--On Saturday, August 10, members of MCC of San Antonio gathered together at a local restaurant, The New Avanti, to honor the outstanding members of their congregation. "It has been a long time coming and we should have done this years ago," says the Rev'd **James Lewey**, pastor of MCCSA. "We have some of the most outstanding people who go beyond the limits in serving God and their brothers and sisters in the community," said Mr. Lewey, "and it's long past due that they be honored for their work."

An Awards Committee established, the Walter F. Ely Memorial Award to be presented to the person who has been outstanding in their service to the church over the last year. The award is named after the late **Walter F. Ely**, a member of MCCSA who served the church in life and by leaving his entire estate to the church, helping MCC repair their first home on South Pine Street.

This year's award was presented to **Raymond S. Taylor**. Mr. Taylor has been a member of the church since 1978. He served as the first co-worship coordinator before the present pastor was installed. He became one of the first deacons and was appointed Senior Deacon in 1980. Ray established the "Deacon's Fund" which is a benevolent fund established to give emergency financial help to church members and members of the community. Ray is actively involved in the gay community, representing the church in many community activities. He recently resigned from the pastoral staff of the church and was elected to a two-year term on the board of directors of MCCSA.

Several other members of the congregation were also honored with beautiful framed certificates and a red rose presented by committee chairperson, **Beverly Smith**.



Pastor Harvey resigns

Los Angeles--MCC Los Angeles was saddened to announce the resignation of their senior pastor, the Rev'd Elder **Jeri Ann Harvey**. Her final service will coincide with the Seventeenth Anniversary Worshp Service of the church, scheduled for Sunday, October 6 at 10:45 a.m.

Preceding this service will be MCC/LA's "Family Reunion Spiritual Renewal," with the the following guest speakers for the 7:30 p.m. services: Rev'd Elder **Nancy Wilson**, Thursday, October 3; and the Rev'd Elder **Troy Perry**, Friday, October 4. On Saturday, October 5, will be the "Family Reunion" Dinner, Dance and Show, (reservations required).

The Rev'd **Marianne Van Fossen**, Associate Pastor, said, "We hope that those of you who have been a part of the mother church in the past will make a special point of attending this renewal so that this will be a true reunion of our extended spiritual family."

Hall of Fame awarded

The Rev'd Grant Ford, pastor of Holy Covenant MCC, Hinsdale (Chicago suburbs), was recently inducted in the "Gay Chicago Hall of Fame." The 1985 honors noted his founding in 1975 of GayLife, Chicago's community weekly.

GSP to fete 15th

Chicago--Good Shepherd Parish in Chicago is celebrating the 15th anniversary of its chartering. Good Shepherd was the first MCC in the Chicago area. The festivities will extend over the week of October 20-27 with a series of wonderful events. Various persons will be preaching at worship services throughout the week, there will be a dinner dance, and concerts.

The week kicks off with pastor Celena Duncan preaching for the regular Sunday services at 9 am and 7 pm. Monday night at 7:30, Sherre L. Boothman, the dean of Samaritan Education Ministries will be bringing the message, followed by pastor Ken T. Martin on Tuesday. Roger Goodman, an internationally known harpsichordist will perform on Wednesday, and will be guest at a post-concert reception. (A $10 donation is requested for the 8:00 concert.) The Rev'd A. Stephen Pieters will preach at the Thursday night service.

Friday night, the 25th, features a dinner-dance. It will start at 7:00 with cocktails before dinner at 8:00. A donation of $25 dollars is requested; angels will donate $30 to help with those of low income who will pay $20. The Good Shepherd Parish choir will accompany the preaching of the Rev'd Elder Emeritus John Hose on Saturday evening.

Finally, to round out the celebration, the founding pastor of Good Schpherd Parish, the Rev'd Arthur Green, will preach at the sunday services on the 27th. All services will be held at the church at 615 W. Wellington in Chicago; the dinner dance will be at the Colosseum, 3819 N. Ashland in Chicago. Information about any of the events may be had by calling (312) 472-8708.

Anniversaries

Springfield--Faith Eternal MCC, Springfield IL, will celebrate its Fifth Anniversary on October 5-6, along with Fellowship Sunday. A banquet is featured for Saturday evening, with the Rev'd **Charlotte Strayhorne**, from Cincinnati OH, preaching on Sunday.

Quincy--MCC Illiamo celebrated its Tenth Anniversary Setpember 14-15, beginning with a picnic on Saturday. The Sunday "Family Reunion" included a "triple header" with Rev'd **Ron Anderson** (pastor), the Rev'd **Reid Christensen** (founding pastor), and Ms. **Mike Howard** (student clergy) preaching. *New York*--Tirmity MCC celebrated their Third Anniversary on Sunday, August 18, with the Rev'd **Willie White**, Northeast District Coordinator, preaching.

Conferences

Northeast--The Fall Conference will be hosted by MCC Springfield on October 25-27. The theme is "Saying 'Yes' to Life." The program emphasizes topics such as AIDS, stress management, counseling persons with serious illnesses, and developing programs accessible to persons with disabilities. There will also be election of officers and other business deliberations.

Great Lakes--The Fall Conference will be hosted by MCC Louisville, with the Rev'd Elders **Troy Perry** and **Freda Smith** as special guest speakers. Workshops, a banquet, and the establishing of new District guidelines will round out the schedule.

What ways did you celebrate Fellowship Sunday? We'd like to hear from you. Send your stories and black-and-white photos to Journey, PO Box 2137, LaGrange IL 60525.



Thanks celebrated

Bournemouth--On Sunday, May 5th, 1985 the Coordinator of the North Sea District, the Rev'd **Robert 'Bob' Arthur**, preached a moving and up-lifting sermon at the service of thanksgiving in the Centre of Unity, which is now the home of MCC Bournemouth, United Kingdom.

Mr. Arthur skillfully wove a tale, utilizing both Old and New Testament scripture to illustrate his theme, "the journeying of the Ark of the Covenant of Moses's time", and comparing it with the movement of the church plate and altar of the Bournemouth group in the six years since it's foundation.

Assisted by student clergy **Neil Thomas**, Mr. Arthur celebrated communion, continuing his sermon theme with an explanation of the significance of the matzos and the cup of Elijah, which are to be found on every Hebrew table at Passover. Some scholars believe this to be the origin of the bread and wine used by Jesus at the Last Supper.

Honored guests at the service included Principal of the Centreof Unity Trust, Mr. **Ron Eager**, a celebrated Faith Healer and teacher, and some of his group.

Worship Coordinator and founding member gPeter W. Parker was able to fill in many details of the groups history and travels, from it's first meetings in a private house to the present.

AIDS

Continued from page 22

such employee. In addition, it is not the function of the CDC to inform people they have AIDS.

At present, stresses Jeff Surlinden, National Institutes of health acting Research Project Coordinator at HBMC, there is no test for AIDS. What records the CDC does have pertain to whether a person has been exposed to the virus--HTLV-III--associated with AIDS. However, the CDC does not have names or telephone numbers of persons who have tested positive; rather, they simply have an indicator number to classify people. "This is a cruel practical joke by someone," Zurlinden said.

MILITARY FEAR

New York--The United States Defense Department, effective October 1, will test all new recruits for exposure to the virus linked with AIDS. The Pentagon, however, denies that the test will be used to screen gay men from the military.

Recruits who test positive on two different tests--the ELISA and Western Blot--will be denied entry into the service. In addition, all persons entering the National Guard, military reserve, senior Reserve Officer Training Corps and military academies will also be tested.

Inside sources at the Pentagon told the New York *Times* that top officials in the military fear the enormous costs associated with caring for persons with AIDS. So far, 86 soldiers have been diagnosed with the disease.

The armed services have given two primary reasons for needing the screening test. First, the Pentagon said those persons with AIDS have little defense against other disease, and, for example, a preventative shot for smallpox could prove fatal. In addition, the Pentagon said the test would help prevent the transmission of AIDS in combat when blood from one person is used to help save another.

Pentagon officials estimated that approximately 75 people a month would be turned away because of positive test results.

MEDIA FEAR

Detroit--A Detroit man set to appear on television August 22 was uninvited after studio technicians and camera crew members refused to work if he appeared. The station, WDIV-Channel 4, felt it has "...a responsibility to its staff and studio audience to protect them from the disease," according to *Metro* of Michigan.

William Townsend, diagnosed with AIDS last May, had been asked to appear on "Telling Secrets with Sonia Friedman." But workers feared they would contract the disease. The station then asked Townsend to be interviewed by phone. He refused, saying he didn't want any part of "that bigotry and paranoia," reported the *Detroit Free Press.* He said his reason for going on the show was to educate people. He added that if he is going to die from AIDS, "I want to let people know that it is not an airborne disease." Townsend had previously been interviewed in the WDIV studio on July 25 to discuss Rock Hudson's AIDS diagnosis.

Townsend said: "I'm just angry at their ignorance. I'm not mad at them. We'll never get this thing under control until people start realizing it's not a gay disease any more."

An attorney familiar with gay-related issues, David Piontkowsky, said legal action could be forthcoming.

TRANSPLANT FEAR

Chicago--The transplant of the heart of an AIDS virus carrier into an ailing teenager in a French hospital was criticized by US doctors as a mistake that exposed the youth to the deadly disease.

"It is incredible that they

Continue on next page

would do such a thing," said Dr. David Ostrow of Northwestern University, who heads the Chicago Health Department's AIDS task force, according to the Chicago *Tribune*.

"We know that AIDS is transmitted through intimate contact," he said. "How much more intimate can you get than by sharing a heart?"

The transplant, which was performed recently at the Henri Mondor Hospital near Paris, involved a 17-year-old boy dying of acute cardiomyopathy who was given only a few weeks to live. The donor was a young man infected with the AIDS virus who committed suicide.

"We had little choice," the Associated Press quoted Dr. Pierre Huguenard, chief of intensive care at the hospital, as saying. The transplant represented the final hope for the boy, he said.

Even if the boy developed AIDS, Huguenard said, he still would have a life expectancy of about five years instead of a few weeks.

Earlier this year the Public Health Service released guidelines that advised against the use of organs from AIDS donors. The agency also advised people in any of the high risk groups not to donate organs or blood.

CONCERN

RUNNERS AND WALKER

Canada--Mark Landsfeld returned to the US after riding 2,650 miles through the Canadian Rockies in an attempt to make more people aware of AIDS. At one point, Landsfeld ran into a roadblock of three large black bears. However, two truckers helped him through his ordeal, he said. Landsfeld is presently biking from Anchorage to Key West to alert people about the deadly disease.

New York-- Brent Nicolson Earle plans to run 10,00 miles for AIDS in March 1986. He has named his run AREA -- American Run for the End of AIDS, according to the Philadelphia *Gay News*. In order to get in shape for his run, Earle planned to take part in Frontrunners/Philadelphia second anniversary half-marathon on September 11-14.

Death Valley--Patty Rose has finished her trek across Death Valley to raise funds for AIDS. Rose, who is not gay or bisexual, was the first woman to walk across the 130 miles of desert during the hottest months of the year--mostly 120 degree heat, according to the *Bay Area Reporter*. She started the walk August 16 and wears a T-shirt that reads "AIDS was never a gay disease."

BENEFIT

East Hampton--Nearly $200,000 was raised August 31 in the impressive "A Gala Night of Stars," marking the first time the rallying of the operatic community in support of AIDS research, reports the New York *Times*. The East End Gay Organization and the Linda Liebman Human Rights Fund were the sponsoring groups. The three-hour event featured performances by several operatic stars.

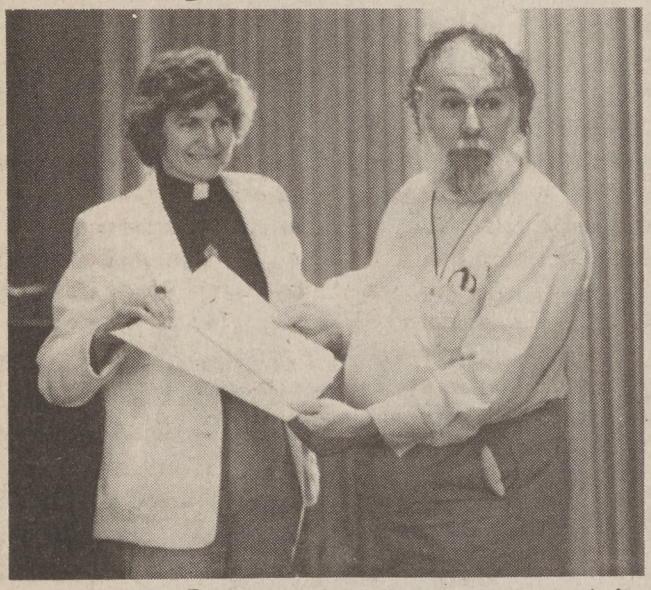
GRANTS

New York--The AIDS Medical Foundation announced grants totaling over $300,000 in support of outstanding AIDS research projects with proceeds from its recent benefit, "Comic Relief," featuring Mike Nichols and Elaine May, Joan Rivers, Steve Martin, Gregory Hines, Randy Newman, Phil Donahue, Penny Marshal, Neil Simon, Penn & Teller, The Weather Girls and the Sacred Heart Gospel Choir.

UFMCC--Two brochures dealing with AIDS are now available from UFMCC: "AIDS: Is It God's Judgement? A Christian View of Faith, Hope and Love" and "AIDS: A Christian Response from Metropolitan Community Church," written by the Rev'd Steve Pieters, which "reflects his own experience as a person with AIDS."



Third World Ministries executive committee
Journey photo



'Joe's Alley' in Old Sacramento is named after the Rev'd Joseph Gilbert. Journey photo



Clergy Credentials and Concerns Committee chairs
Journey photo

General Conference

Continued from page 20

in Christ Jesus. In the words of the consecration, '. . . this is my Body. . . this is my Blood. . . . ' These are incredibly strong words of gracewords of healingthat are filled with new meaning and with new life for me. As a person who's body has had cancer, who's blood has been infected with AIDS, 'this is MY Body. . . this is MY Blood!" And then to us he stated, "You are the Body of Christ. " We rejoiced as we saw the connection and realized that we all are truly in this together! The workshops covered all aspects of this crisis from safe sex to the media to various resources. The speakers included PWA's, physicians, a social worker, and an epidemiologist. I pray that every church in our Fellowship will make a concerted effort in this next year to support their surrounding communities as we enter one of the most overwhelming eras of our history. Our peace comes from the fact that truly, our God is greater than AIDS!

What can be said about the morning and evening worship services? Spiritfilled and Spiritcontrolled are the most descriptive statements that I can make. From the special music to the speakers, we most certainly are a wealth of talent. No matter what background you come from, there was something there for you in the services. One of my greatest joys was being exposed to various types of worship that I was not used to and seeing what I had been missing all my life!/b

I clearly experienced this on Friday evening as the Rev'd Elder Jeri Ann Harvey led us into a healing service with her dynamic message. She shared with us her vision of Christ a few years back that put an end to any doubts she had regarding her ministry and



what it stood for. I needed to hear that then and have since reflected on it several times. During the healing service she encouraged all of us to be involved. Although I was new to MCC, I was not a new Christian and could not understand why I was unable to get up and pray with others for healing in their lives. It was more than the fact that this was the first healing service that I had ever been to. After about ten minutes the Lord showed me that I had some healing that had to take place in may own life first. Fear and doubt can be as crippling to the child of God as any physical ailment. As I felt the flooding release of God's love through my sisters loving prayer, I felt the release of the chains that kept my heart and soul in turmoil. The Spirit found an open channel through which to flow as I then prayed with other brothers and sisters who came forward with their particular needs.

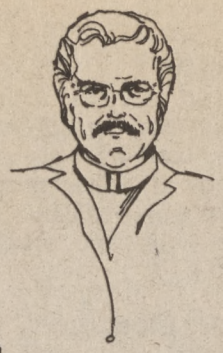
Another day, I was almost in tears as I listened to the Nigerian Church sing to us as their contribution to General Conference. I can't wait until someday they are listening to a tape from us because General Conference XX is in Nigeria! I was greatly moved as the Rev'd Elder Jean White shared the open areas of our world that could not have churches at this time because of a lack of qualified people and funds. The Rev'd Brock echoed her in his message at the Ordination service by reminding us that two hundred churches are giving only thirty-five thousand dollars a year to see that the rest of the world hears the Gospel while one church in Florida has a larger annual budget than our whole entire Fellowship! Our brothers and sisters in Mexico are meeting underground because they are not allowed to meet in private homes and have trouble finding government places to meet. Churches in Mexico are not allowed to own their own property--it must be owned by the government. We need to raise $150,000 this year to buy property in Mexico so that our family can worship freely and in peace. If 2,780 people would commit themselves to giving one dollar a week to this project, in one year we could have the needed finances. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." Where IS our treasure?

Elder Michael Mank rebuked clergy and laity alike in his Thursday evening message. He reminded the laity that in 1981, by their request, the Fellowship affirmed the "priesthood of all believers." It seems, though, that many of us wanted the title of lay minister **without** the responsibilities. God will not unleash power to its fullest extent in our communities until we are ALL working together. He challenged the clergy to help the lay people in their congregations to determine their spiritual gifts and then provide them with opportunities to exercise them. The chain is only as strong as its weakest link. We need to examine our lives to make sure that we ourselves are not the weak links.

I am quite sure that I could go on forever about my first General Conference. Let it suffice to say that our joy was expressed on Saturday evening as we watched and listened to each other sing, dance, sign, and mime. The Conference Center literally threw us out that night or we might have kept right on! I thought that the Lord would surely descend or else we would go right through the ceiling as Jimmi Irving led the Gospel Choir of the 'Mother Church' in "It Is Well." As I look back to where we've come from and at where we are now, it is no wonder that this song is so special to us. Everyone thrilled to hear one of our Conference theme songs, "Free to Be" sung by joint composers Marsha Stevens and Ken Caton. On Sunday morning, we had the opportunity to hear them sing "For Those Tears I Died," which Marsha wrote sixteen years ago. A highlight of the week for me was being able to sing in the Conference Choir. Bob Crocker did an excellent job of taking a bunch of people who had never sung with each other before and producing seven beautiful songs in just a few short days.

Let me not close without stating that no General Conference is complete without announcements. No one could have delivered them with the candor, life, and verve that Sue Shrader did. It was a sorrowful moment for all of us when, on Saturday night, she delivered her last new item. The ABC Evening News will never be the same for me again. I can only look forward to the next Conference!

The Next Step



Charity begins at home

The budget at General Conference was being discussed, and many people were upset that their major concerns were not being financially addressed. I admit that I had a few favorite oxen lined up for goring myself. But I had to look at the final figures and admit, "There just ain't enough money."

With calculator in hand, I went to work, only to discover that "...it's no wonder we don't have the money." Since all our members, including clergy, certainy must be giving at least a tithe, I divided our estimated membership into the total estimated budget, and then divided again by ten. I found out that the average income of the members of our Fellowship is well below the poverty line. Our average income must be well below a hundred dollars a week!

This may be so for some, including impoverished clergy in smaller churches, but certainly it could not be for all members of the Fellowship. Even in view of overwhelming support for General Conference resolutions on the practice of tithing, it is possible that my conclusion that we all "do what we say" is faulty.

In the past, we've budgeted amounts "for consciousness' sake," without any thought to where the money was to come from. I recall in Toronto, when the Rev'd Renee McCoy, who was chair of Third World Ministries, spoke regarding the proposed budget: "At least you're telling me the truth. You don't have it, and you're not going to lie to us and tell us you're going to give it to us."

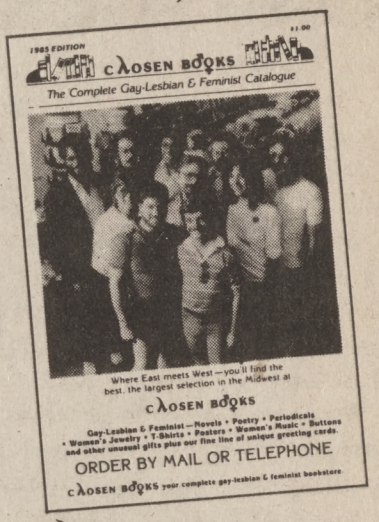
Quite frankly, we're not doing all we should be doing on our "ten percent." We are woefully lacking in programs of social action and concern. But where's the money to come from? Could it be that we're not putting "ten percent" in the local plate?

Perhaps the solution to Fellowship finances begins at home.

-- Grant Lynn Ford

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"Look at the Metropolitan Community Church today – the Gay Church – almost accepted into the World Council... National Council of Churches. Almost. The vote was against them. But they will try again and again until they get in. And the tragedy is that they would get one vote. Because they are spoken of here in Jude as being brute beasts – that is going to the baser lust of the flesh to live immorally and so Jude describes this as apostasy. Thank God this vile and satanic system will one day be utterly annihilated and there will be a celebration in heaven."

From a Sermon on the TV Program "Old Time Gospel Hour" by Rev. Jerry Falwell, President, Moral Majority.

No, Jerry, that's not what Metropolitan Community Church is like because:



We are a caring, loving group of people.

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